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INFO RUEHXP/ALL NATO POST COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE 4739
RUEHPF/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH IMMEDIATE 0042
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 0049

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 000146

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STATE FOR EAP/FO, EAP/ANP, EAP/RSP, EUR/FO, AND EUR/RPM
PHNOM PENH FOR POLCOUNS MCKEAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/14/2017

TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NZ](#)

SUBJECT: NEXT STEPS WITH ALLIES ON AFGHANISTAN

REF: SECSTATE 13880

Classified By: DCM David J. Keegan,
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The GNZ understands the pressures for more resources in Afghanistan and will review carefully our request for additional NATO/ISAF commitments. Current NZ Defence Force (NZDF) deployments to Afghanistan will likely be extended through September 2009, but GNZ will probably not increase its commitments, either for the operational needs cited reftel or for a new Special Forces redeployment. The Ministry of Defence says it cannot offer more because NZDF needs to be able to maintain its forces in the Solomons and in E.Timor. Australia has asked New Zealand to take on more of the burden in Timor, to help enable Australia to cover its efforts elsewhere. End Summary.

¶2. (C) On February 14, Pol-Econ Couns and DATT met with Deputy Defence Secretary Chris Seed to discuss reftel request for further contributions to Afghanistan and NATO-ISAF. Seed said our request was not unexpected. Over the past months, senior NATO officials and NATO member leaders have made more general requests to PM Clark, Defence Minister Goff, and Foreign Minister Peters. NATO SG de Joop Scheffer also raised the issue during Minister Goff's January visit to Europe. Canada and the UK have made specific requests for NZ contributions to their own operations in Afghanistan, and New Zealand Embassy officials have attended briefings at the State Department. Seed said that as a result of these conversations, the GNZ fully understands the pressures ISAF is facing. He promised to formally submit the list to Defence Minister Goff and senior Defence and Foreign Ministry officials, and said they would review it carefully.

¶3. (C) Seed said that he expects that GNZ Ministers will within the next few weeks agree to extend NZDF's PRT deployment to September 2009, from its current mandate of September 2007. It is also likely the Ministers will extend NZDF's other commitments, including ISAF HQ liaisons, logistics assistance, and training for Afghan army and police. It is not/not likely the GNZ can commit any new assets this year, particularly Special Forces, given NZDF's commitments in the Solomon Islands and E. Timor. Seed said it appears especially likely that NZDF will need to remain in Timor at least through 2008, given the situation on the ground there. Australia has also asked NZDF to take on more of the Coalition Task Force burden in Timor, to enable the Australians to cover their contributions elsewhere.

¶4. (C) This is the longest extension of an NZDF deployment to Afghanistan since the war began. (The last extension was

for eighteen months.) Seed says this is because the GNZ wants to demonstrate its clear commitment to Afghanistan. In addition, the next New Zealand general election will likely be held in late 2008, and the extra time will enable the new Government to avoid having to make a hasty decision about whether or not to extend the deployment again.

¶5. (C) Emboffs will also discuss reftel request with working level contacts at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Ministry of Defence.

McCormick